

special status plants on BLM lands. The scattered nature of the public lands to the west of the Sierra Nevada and north of the Tehachapi Mountains makes inventory extremely difficult.

In 1991 BLM-California estimated that only 11 percent of its public lands had been adequately inventoried for special status plants, that only 6 percent of its special status plants were being monitored, and that only 4 of 65 needed studies had been completed. The situation is only slightly better today.

Greater effort will be required to more thoroughly understand the rare flora of the public lands in California. The BLM, together with all those interested in the conservation of special status plants, must try even harder to gather the information required to develop ecosystem management plans that truly conserve the State's rare plants and natural plant communities.

(Received 7 Oct 1994; accepted 20 Jan 1995)

OVERVIEW OF THE U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

JAN C. KNIGHT

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sacramento Field Office,
2800 Cottage Way, Room E-1803, Sacramento, California 95825

MISSION AND ROLE OF THE FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

The mission of the Fish and Wildlife Service is to conserve, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Fish and Wildlife Service has regulatory authority and enforcement responsibility: Endangered Species Act administration; migratory birds (Migratory Bird Treaty Act); certain marine mammals (Marine Mammal Protection Act); National Wildlife Refuges (National Wildlife Refuge Systems Administration Act of 1966); interstate and international fishery resources; fish and wildlife grant program administration (Wetlands Reserve Program, Section 6 Endangered Species Act); mapping wetlands of the U.S. and providing wetland information for planning purposes (National Wetlands Inventory); enforcement of Endangered Species Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act; inspection of imports to protect fish, wildlife, and plants.

The Fish and Wildlife Service has review authority or provides technical assistance and expertise on fish and wildlife and their habitats in the following areas: 1) On water resources development projects for Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, or Soil Conservation Service (Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act); 2) on permit proposals for wetlands permits issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and for hydropower licensing by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act in concert with Clean Water Act, Rivers and Harbors Act, Federal Power Act); 3) to other Federal, state, and public agencies on effects of environmental contaminants, and in remediation of adverse contaminant effects, on fish and wildlife resources (Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Clean Water Act, Federal Environmental Pesticide Control Act, Superfund, Oil Pollution Act); 4) support and coordination in coastal areas in implementing management, restoration, and protection of coastal ecosystems (Bay/Estuary Program); and 5) technical assistance for conservation and restoration of wetlands and associated upland habitats in support of Farm Bill (Food Security Act).

GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Fish and Wildlife Service is a Federal agency in the Department of the Interior. The Director and Deputy Director are political appointees having background or experience in resource management. Decision-making is delegated primarily to the Regional and field office levels.

The Service is administratively organized into 7 geographic regions. California is in Region 1, which also includes Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, and Idaho. Region 1 headquarters are in Portland, Oregon.

The Service employs 11 full-time botanists in California. Ten are in the Division of Endangered Species and 1 is in the Division of Water Resources.

The Service manages approximately 91 million acres in the National Wildlife Refuge System, making it the third largest Federal landholder after Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service. Land ownership by the Service is restricted to lands in the National Wildlife Refuge System, or fish hatchery facilities.

The majority of agency functions described above are not derived from its land management responsibilities and typically are administered out of field offices distributed throughout the regions, generally 1 per state. California's three field offices are located in Sacramento, Ventura, and Carlsbad.

Sacramento Field Office is responsible for the Central Valley to the crest of the Tehachapis and coastal counties from Santa Clara

north; Ventura is responsible for the east side of the Sierras, northern Mojave, and coastal counties from Santa Cruz to Ventura; Carlsbad is responsible for southern California from approximately Los Angeles and Riverside Counties south.

SCOPE OF FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PLANT CONSERVATION

The Service's most significant role in plant conservation lies in its responsibility for Endangered Species Act implementation and administration. Agency conservation functions under this law include candidate species assessment, listing/delisting/reclassification, recovery planning, technical assistance, cooperation with the states, Federal agency consultations, habitat conservation planning, and permits.

California currently has 47 listed endangered and 5 listed threatened plant species; 42 proposed endangered and 16 proposed threatened plant species; and 621 candidate plant species. California is second only to Hawaii in total number of listed plants.

Approximately 60 federally listed plants have been identified on National Wildlife Refuge System lands nationally. In California, the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge manages nearly all remaining habitat for 2 listed plants, Antioch Dunes evening-primrose and Contra Costa wallflower. At least 6 other listed or proposed plants are known from refuge lands in California. Complete botanical inventories do not exist for California's refuges, however, and the extent of rare plant populations they actually support is unknown. Recent agency emphasis on ecosystem management may direct funding to inventories and encourage heightened management awareness of rare plant resources on refuge lands.

HIGHLIGHTS OF CURRENT CONSERVATION ACTIVITIES

The Service contributed nearly \$339,000 to the California Department of Fish and Game in 1994 for cooperative plant conservation projects under Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act. This is an all-time high for Fish and Game's Endangered Plant Program. California's rare plants should continue to benefit from new guidelines for allocating Section 6 funds that consider the total number of listed and candidate species as well as conservation benefit of a project, rather than financial parity between states.

(Received 7 Oct 1994; accepted 20 Jan 1995)